2:Métraux--12 E-5 (1930-1931) 1935, 1936 SF24 Uru SF24
Carangas-
Chipaya

/117 cont./

had to manifest itself through the intermediary of Aymara. The Uro dialect of the Chipaya is thus an ailing language in the process of disappearing in the future that I believe to have saved from oblivion, if not in its entirety, at least to a great extent.

The territory. The physical environment is that of the puna (Pl. VI, A /see p. 30 /) artificially altered by man. If one arrives in Chipaya coming from the north, one traverses for almost a day an uninterrupted succession of sand dunes, to which some tufts of long, hard graminoeus plants (ichu, Stipa ichu (Jarava) or the black, twisted stalks of tolas (Baccharis Lepidophyllum and other Compositae) cling. Once the dune area has been crossed the terrain becomes completely flat, and the rarer tolares alternate with the mossy swellings of yareta (Azorella). In places the vegetation disappears completely, but the most sterile parts are adorned with some Alpine flowers, which make imperceptible spots of color against the greyness of the ground. The Indians are not disdainful of them. I remember having seen them gather bunches of them during a festival to stick in their hair or to decorate the images of saints. The aridity of this sandy soil manifests itself with an intensity which becomes more and more acute the closer one comes to Chipaya territory. The boundary is marked by the complete disappearance of the plants mentioned above and by the appearance of stunted grass, thinly sown, which hardly reaches a few centimeters in height. These wretched pastures are the product of human industry. The Chipaya obtain them thanks to a system of irrigation that would do honor to their spirit of enterprise were it not the necessary condition of their existence in this environment. Using canals, some of which are almost two meters deep and three meters across, they have diverted a part of the waters of the Lauca River and conducted it by secondary branches across the entire extent of their territory. During the rainy season and the period of great floods, they provoke inundations by raising a few dams here and there. The water fertilizes the sands of the

2:96Mmaco--15 E-5 (1930-1931) 1933, 1936 SF24 Urs SF24

Carangas-
Chipaya

/117 cont./

puna, which are covered with sparse herbage. In some places lagoons are formed which are propitious for growing water plants, which serve as food for the pigs, as black and hairy as boars. The Chipaya assert that 12 kinds of plants grow in their soil, the names of which they obligingly enumerate in prayers to their divinities. As I am not a botanist /118/ I could not verify the accuracy of this assertion. It nevertheless reveals a certain care for precision among the Chipaya, which is perhaps superfluous when one considers the scantiness of this flora which a little wetness causes to grow in the midst of sand. In January and February the territory of Chipaya has the appearance of a vast swamp. This monotonous and desolate land is suddenly transfigured as if animated by the magic of the refraction of a supernatural life: a few small religious buildings plastered with white earth are transformed into sparkling mosques, the "water houses" and the enlarged and multiplied pigsties give birth to strange cities which line the edges of immense lakes in which bizarrely cut mountains are reflected. In the sky the clouds draw into strange formations and assume a luster elsewhere unknown. It is also the period of great storms. There are days when half the horizon is illuminated by the sun while the other, in the night, is ravaged by the tempest and furrowed by lightning.

Without these periodic inundations the territory of Chipaya would be only a sandy plain identical with those denuded expanses which separate it from the Coipasa salt marshes. Thus the existence of the Chipaya depends on the flooding of the Lauca River, which, practically dry in winter, carries a considerable amount of water in the summer. Sometimes it happens that the characteristic winter dryness is prolonged into the summer months, threatening to destroy, along with the wretched grassy vegetation of the "cannon," the flocks which feed upon it. This is the most crucial time of the year, the one in which the fortunes of the tribe are at stake. Hence it is not astonishing that all the great festivals of the Chipaya take place at this time and that all have the

/145/

/Pl. I faces p. 145./

The last group of Uru Indians living in the village of Iru-Itu, or Angoake, on the banks of the Desaguadero, about 25 kilometers from Lake Titicaca, has almost entirely disappeared in the course of the last years.

A long period of drought between 1940 and 1945 has lowered the level of Lake Titicaca by more than three meters; at many points the water has receded several hundred meters.

At the time of my first trip in 1938, the village of Iru-Itu had about 100 inhabitants; the Desaguadero went through vast swamps dotted with numerous ponds and lagoons with a great abundance of totora beds /totorales/. In 1941 a plain of sterile sand had replaced the swamps and fields of reeds; the Desaguadero was reduced to a narrow, muddy ditch.

Because of this the Uru have lost practically all their means of existence. The swamps covered with reeds, the totora beds, furnished them with the Scirpus necessary to make their fishing balsas and to cover their houses and served as shelter for numerous aquatic fauna: fish, suches (Trichomycterus dispar and rivulatus), bogas, hispe, carache (various Orestias), and birds sought by the Indians for their meat and eggs. Their entire economy, based partly on hunting and fishing and partly on the sale of totora fishing balsas and mats to the neighboring Indians, has thus been destroyed.

Many of the Uru are dead. Others, the young ones, have dispersed, mingling with the neighboring Aymara groups; some have joined the Lake Titicaca fishers. The old ones, /146/ traditions and incapable of adapting themselves to new conditions of existence, have remained in the dead village.

In 1944 most of the houses had been abandoned; the totora roofs could not be repaired for lack of reeds, and many had given way. Only 21 people remained in the village; several women were of Aymara origin, and the few children were in part Uru-Aymara half-breeds.

3:Vellard--6b D,E-5 (1938-1944) 1949 SF24 Uru SF24

501

5. Balsas of totoras (1942).

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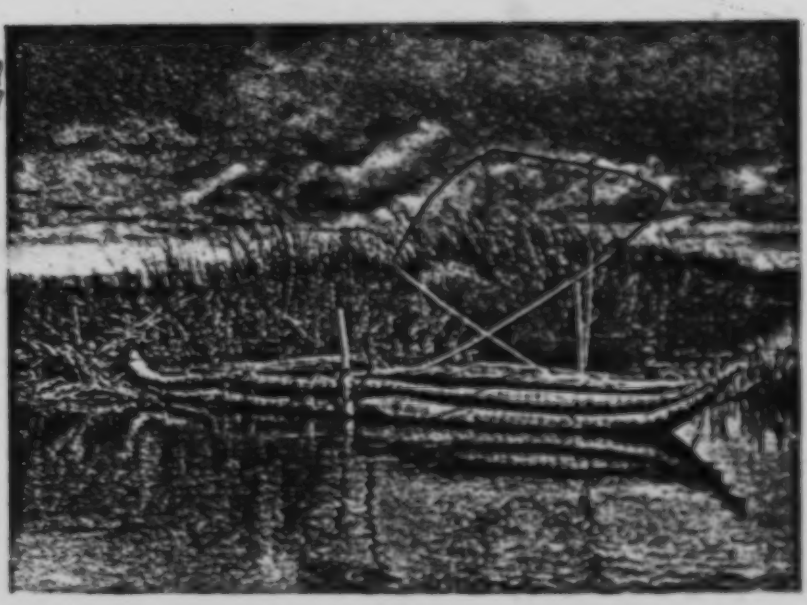

6. Balsa with large net (yak° kaka). Account VI /see p. 16/.

[16th - 17th Centuries]

/35 cont./

(Juan Alfonso Carrizo, Cancionero popular de Jujuy /Book of Popular Songs of Jujuy/, p. XV. Tucuman, 1935.)

/36/ Calancha (Father Antonio de la)

In his Cronica moralizada /Moral Chronicle/ of the order of St. Augustine, Father de la Calancha speaks at length and in several passages of the Uru.

In the Province of Paria which the illustrious benefactor Lorenço de Aldana gave us...; the largest number of Indians who inhabit it are Uro Indians, the most ignorant people of Peru, obscene and dark-skinned /renegrida/ they eat raw meat, lived on Lakes, and only like marshy country. The chief pueblos in this Province are Paria or Challacollo. /Translated from the Spanish./

(Volume I, p. 353.)

This pueblo (of Chaliacollo) had 2,400 tax-paying Indians who were being catechized by our Order.... These are crude Uro Indians, without breeding, dark-skinned /renegrida/, without cleanliness, enemies of social intercourse, and not at all prone to the cult of our faith; for subsistence and gain they fish in the lake of Paria...those who live on land /do so/ in sepultures underground owing to the cold, and when they live on the lake, their houses are on platforms and cattails...the Uro Indians are born, grow up, and live on this lake over the water on the cattails, which here are called totorales, and which are very thick, and with this kind of light rushes, here they live with no clothes or coverings (and this in a very cold land) than some mats of these cattails....Their language is the most obscure, disjointed, and crude of all in Peru, entirely guttural, and it cannot be written without great confusion. There is another pueblo that is called Capinota, and it is a Priory with a subsidiary church of Uro Indians called Charamoco where the teaching religious of Itapaya teaches since he is only one league away....There is another pueblo four leagues

5 La Barre E-5 (1937-1938) 1946
SF24 Ura SF24

Plate III.—Ute **fishing and gathering canoe scenes.** Top: Man paddling down a tributary fish net. Bottom: Towing bundles of wood with a lariat. (Courtesy Alfred Whitman.)

[P 582-C]

8.Form T-6 (ca.1934) 1000
SP24 Uru SP24
Iru Ilu

There

were some withered Palm-Sunday decorations made from the reeds which border the river. They were plaited and twisted and fringed and hung on rusty nails. The door stood partially open. A low adobe wall surrounded the building. There were no trucks in evidence. A family of donkeys had taken up their residence there. We gave them some biscuit and apple, and they followed us down the stony path to where the village was assembled. The cameras were ticking, and our chauffeur Carlos had been presented to stupefied with a wooden clapper. Our star was continuing her role with renewed enthusiasm; leaning against the wall were two boys 11 or 12 years old, one had beautiful smooth regular features. I photographed him, but he never moved, nor seemed conscious of our presence. We left him standing motionless and followed the younger one down to the river where a man was plaiting reeds, preparatory to making a balsa.

Some fifteen years ago the whole region suffered from a severe drought. The watershed of the lake descended from twelve to fifteen feet and many of the marshes dried out, and the reeds, the totora, withered and disappeared. These totoras play as important a part among the Uru as the llama among the Aymara or Quechua on the Altiplano. While the stems are used for making balsas, sails and ropes, the roots or knowe are the staple diet of the Uru, who also use it to brew a kind of beer, allowing the tubercles to ferment.

Fortunately in these last few years the climatic conditions have once more returned to normal, and with the rise of the lake the totora have once more increased. These reeds, with their tall pointed bows, have the gracefulness of a gondola. They are composed of three cylinders, two forming the sides and one the centre. The reeds are plaited into long braids, the end being held between the man's toes. These braids are then plaited together and together again, and all these ropes are assembled, entwined and laced together. Two men work simultaneously,

[p.213-A]

9:La Barre E-4,5 (1938) 1941
SF24 Uru SF24

Environment. The Río Desaguadero, as its name implies, is the outlet of Lake Titicaca and flows roughly south to Lake Poopo.* Near the lake, where uptilted strata testify to a major geological upheaval at some time in the past, the river flows relatively swiftly through the rocky gate, but on reaching a broad valley between the range of foothills west of the Tiahuanaco plain and a corresponding range in Peru, it slows down considerably. The Desaguadero endlessly bifurcates as the river reaches the Uru swamps. The giant *totora*-reeds stretch higher than a man's head, and clumps of these are alive with numerous and almost tame waterfowl of many varieties, which apparently have never been hunted other than with *balsa*. In the clear, cold water of the river, dozens of varieties of water plants can be seen waving in the current, and in and out of these can be seen darting abundant fish—although these last belong to only about four or five varieties. Near the village half-wild cattle can be heard and occasionally seen plunging through the swampy shallows to eat the succulent white roots of the *totora* (the Uru have scant mainland pasturage for cattle or llamas). In the mountains back of their lands are pumas and vicuñas, but nearby there are only viscachas (a bushy-tailed, rabbit-eared rodent of the chinchilla family), the *altiplano* fox (*Aymará g'omay'ri*), and the domesticated guinea-pig.

The stony, dry soil at this altitude, when uncultivated, bears only *t'ola*, a kind of greenbrush used as a fuel, as in also yareta, a low, gray-green, semiubiferous moss suggesting a large, woody, resinous cauliflower; and a few small flowered herbs. The altitude of the Uru country is about 12,000 feet, hence, though it is not far south of the Equator, the air is cold and rare. The rainy season, from late November to early March, comprises the summer. Although the middle of the day can be more than uncomfortably warm

* The best way to reach the Uru is to proceed northwest from Guaqui, on Lake Titicaca, by land over a small range of mountains or by water on the Lake, to the little village of Desaguadero, which straddles the river of that name at its head, being thus in both Peruvian and Bolivian territory. Balsas are the only means of transportation on the river, and it is imperative to secure experienced rivermen as guides through the elaborate waterways of the swamps in the middle Desaguadero. Stalking on the river and the temporary loss of a baggage balsa in the swampy reeds it for me, my one half-breed and two native companions, a two-day trip, though it should normally be made in one long day's travel. Instead of bearing laboriously upstream on the return trip to the Lake, one may go by land cross-country north of Jesus de Machaca. The cold, dry winds from the mountains in this region speedily wreak the misery inconvenience of chapped and bleeding lips, and in certain seasons it is a nuisance to find in travelling that rivers on which one had been depending for drinking water have dried up. Weapons, with which I stupidly neglected to provide myself, are probably more nearly necessary in this region than elsewhere in the altiplano. Bandolier-toted cowherders were Indians in 1938, and according to Bolivian authorities, the flash of murdered whites was an unplanned during native uprisings as late as 1921 in this Jesus de Machaca region.

9:La Barre E-4,5 (1938) 1941
SF24 Uru SF24

calling themselves "Bukina" or "Pukina," which agrees with the synonymy of Ehrenreich, Hervas, *et al.* The "*Uruquillas*" of the early chroniclers appears to have meant the Uru; but Chamberlain's "Urinsaya" is the name of a *moiety*, not of the tribe, and is moreover an Aymará word.

Bertonio, a missionary of the late 16th century, gives the Aymará name, probably opprobrious, "*Kiechacotati:* Big-livered [People], Nickname of the Puquinas." Chamberlain notes the Quechua name for the Uru as *Yuracare*, but Mossi says their Quechua designation is *Urocolla*. Paredes says the Aymára call the Uru "*Chancumankheri*" [etymologized by my interpreter as *lonko-mang'eri*, lit. "water-*kolscho*-eaters," i.e. eaters of the water-plants of the genera *Myriophyllum*, *Potomogeton*, *Claraphora*, *Elodea*, and *Chara*] or "Chancu." The tradition was that their ancestors were brought from the Pacific coast by the great Colla or Aymára conqueror, Tacuilla, but the Aymára say that the "*achachila*" or place-deity of the Uru is the swamp itself, much as Mt. Illimani is the place-deity of the Aymára in its region. Neveu-Lemaire[2] says that the Uru were the group from whom the Inca exacted the famous tribute of lice.

Posnansky notes several place-names—Urubamba, Urupampa, Urmiri, Urucollo, Uru-Uru (Oruro), and others—which he believes incorporate the name Uru, but these are etymologizable in Aymará, in which language "uru" means "day," or according to some authorities "worm."[3] Polo suggests the implausible etymology from "uri" (Aymará "unconquered, brave"); but in the 17th century "uro" or "uru" seems to have been in current use in the sense of "dirty, ragged, rustic," etc. A punning proverb, "De indio Uro ningun hombre esta seguro" ("No man is safe from an Uru Indian"), appears to testify to the treachery of an incompletely subjected minority.

Temperament. The temperament of the Uru has been spoken of in no very flattering terms by all who have known them. Acosta said that they were so brutish as not even to have considered themselves human: "Son estos *Uros* tan brutales que ellos mismos no se tienen por hombres." Garcilaso de la Vega called them "rudos y torpes," rude and stupid. Even the

[2] Neveu-Lemaire, *Les Lages, LX-LXI;* this authority also says that the name of the Departamento of Oruro and its capital city in Bolivia comes from the reduplication "Uru-uru." Other authorities in this paragraph not heretofore listed: Arturo Posnansky, *Antropología y Sociología de las Razas Interandinas y de las Regiones Adyacentes* (La Paz, 1937), p. 59; Ludovico Bertonio, *Vocabulario de la Lengua Aymara*, Juli (Chucuito) [Peru] 2 vols. 1612 [facsimile edition, J. Platzmann, Leipzig 1869] vol. 2, p. 303; Ramiro Mossi, *Diccionario Quechua* (Sucre, 1860); Rigoberto Paredes, *Mitos, Supersticiones y Supervivencias Populares de Bolivia*, 2nd ed. (La Paz, 1936), p. 25.

[3] In connection with the meaning "day" see the myth in Métraux *JSAP* 27: 305 ff.